

Adding and Editing Attribute Fields

In this Chapter you will learn

- How to add a field to your attribute table
- About the different data types you can use for your attribute data
- How to edit data in an attribute table

ISTC Topic:

2.2

1. Adding a Field and Editing Attributes

Exercise 1: Adding a text field and editing manually

1. Open a new map document in ArcMap and add the Plots shapefile.
2. Open the attribute table for the Plots shapefile and that that this small fictional dataset contains three plots and the name of the people who own this plot.
3. In this exercise you will add a field indicating the value of the land. Add a field as shown below.



2.2. Adding a Field and Editing Attributes

1. Click drop-down button and click "Add Field"

2. Type "VALUE" for the name

3. Select "Double" as the data type

4. Precision is the width of the field. This is maximum number of characters this new field will hold

5. Scale indicates the number of digits after the decimal point.

6. Click OK

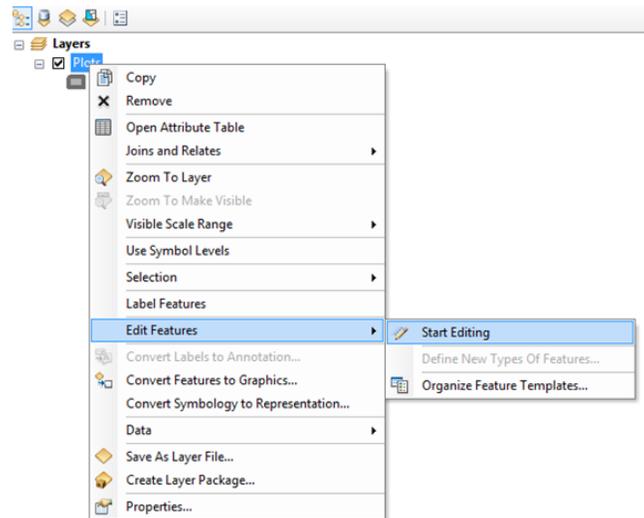
The screenshot shows the 'Table' menu with 'Add Field...' selected. The 'Add Field' dialog box is open, showing 'Name: VALUE', 'Type: Double', 'Precision: 10', and 'Scale: 0'. The 'Field Properties' section is also visible.

4. Note that once the name and data type of an attribute field has been set up it cannot be changed. In the previous step you set your new field to a “Double” data type. The table below provides an explanation for the different data type options.

Data type	Description
Short Integer	Holds whole numbers between -32,000 and + 32,000
Long Integer	Holds whole numbers between - 2 billion and + 2 billion
Float	Holds real numbers (i.e. numbers with decimal points)
Double	Holds real numbers. Larger than a float.
Text	Holds numbers and letters. Sometimes referred to as a String
Date	Date in the mm/dd/yyyy hh:mm:ss format including AM or PM

5. To populate the VALUE field you just created you must start editing. Start an edit session by right-clicking on the Plots layer in the table of contents and selection Edit Features > Start Editing as shown on the right. The value for each plot is as follows:

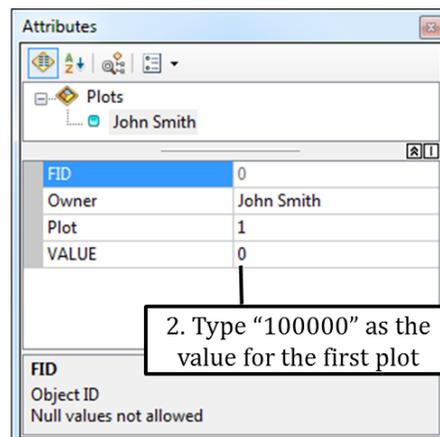
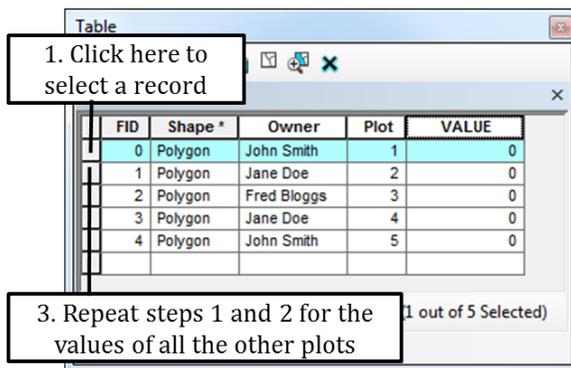
Plot	Value
1	\$ 100,000
2	\$ 120,000
3	\$ 120,000
4	\$ 80,000
5	\$ 130,000



6. Click on the Attribute Tool on the Editor toolbar as shown on the right



7. Click on the VALUE field for the first plot in the attribute table and type “100000” (do not use dollar signs, commas or points) as shown below. Add the values for plots 2 through 5.

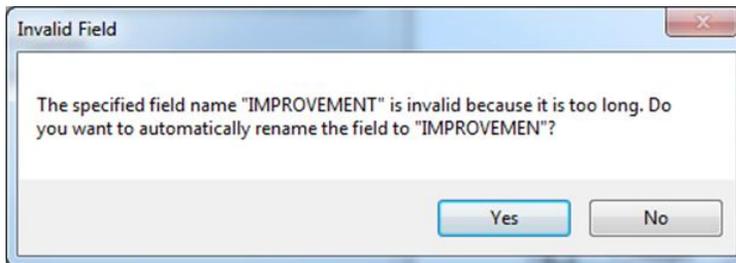


- When you are done Save your Edits and then Stop Editing as shown on the right. Note that your attribute table should look like the one below.



FID	Shape *	Owner	Plot	VALUE
0	Polygon	John Smith	1	100000
1	Polygon	Jane Doe	2	120000
2	Polygon	Fred Bloggs	3	120000
3	Polygon	Jane Doe	4	80000
4	Polygon	John Smith	5	130000

- Add another field to your table and call it "IMPROVEMENT", set the data type to text as shown on the right. Note the following error dialog:



- Note that attribute field names in a shapefile can only have 10 or fewer digits. Click "Yes" to accept the proposed new name.
- Start an editing session and populate the IMPROVEMEN field as shown on the right.
- Save your edits and stop editing.

FID	Shape *	Owner	Plot	VALUE	IMPROVEMEN
0	Polygon	John Smith	1	100000	YES
1	Polygon	Jane Doe	2	120000	YES
2	Polygon	Fred Bloggs	3	120000	YES
3	Polygon	Jane Doe	4	80000	NO
4	Polygon	John Smith	5	130000	NO



Was the "Add Field" command greyed out? Then stop your editing session and try again